

# League of Women Voters Does Not Want Constitution Rewrite

A convention to rewrite Alaska's 10-year-old constitution is neither necessary nor desirable at this time, according to the League of Women Voters of Alaska.

Announcement of the League's position came last week from Mrs. Duane Oliphant, state League president. She said her organization will oppose passage of the constitutional convention referendum during the November general election.

"The League supports the Constitution of the State of Alaska, relying on the amendment process for any needed change between now and 1980 when the question of whether or not there should be a constitutional convention comes before us again in referendum," a position statement declared.

Mrs. Oliphant said local Leagues in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Ketchikan and Kodiak studied the matter extensively. They found that the Alaska State Constitution meets well the objective of a state constitution:

"It should provide a framework for statutory law; be flexible, concise and adaptable to changing needs; establish the basic functions of the executive, legislative and judicial branches with checks and balances and provide for the protection of group and individual rights."

"Where there are criticisms, such as there frequently are of local government, the problems are not with the constitutional provisions but with the implementation of the provisions," the League stated.

Citing its opposition to a convention at this time, the League observed that the 1955-56 convention was "noteworthy in that public interest in the constitution was widespread, but special interests and lobbies were notably absent. This would not be the case in a convention

held now."

"The many pressure groups lining up to participate in the direction of our state government in this dramatic period would participate in this convention."

Desirable features of the con-

stitution might be replaced with features we will regret when the excitement settles," the League declared.

Other reasons for opposing a convention were the possible astronomical costs and the fact that the constitution has been in

effect only 10 years, "insufficient time to judge and revise institutions still in the evolutionary stages."

"The League finds that the type and nature of proposed amendments, such as introduced in the recent legislature, are pos-

sible within the framework of the existing constitution."

The constitution study was chaired on the state level by Mrs. Howard Staley, who is also president of the Fairbanks League. Locally the study was headed by Mrs. Herman Slotnik.